



MOVE Passion Play in Glover, Vermont. Photo by Ron Simon



Verses © Burt Porter 1998

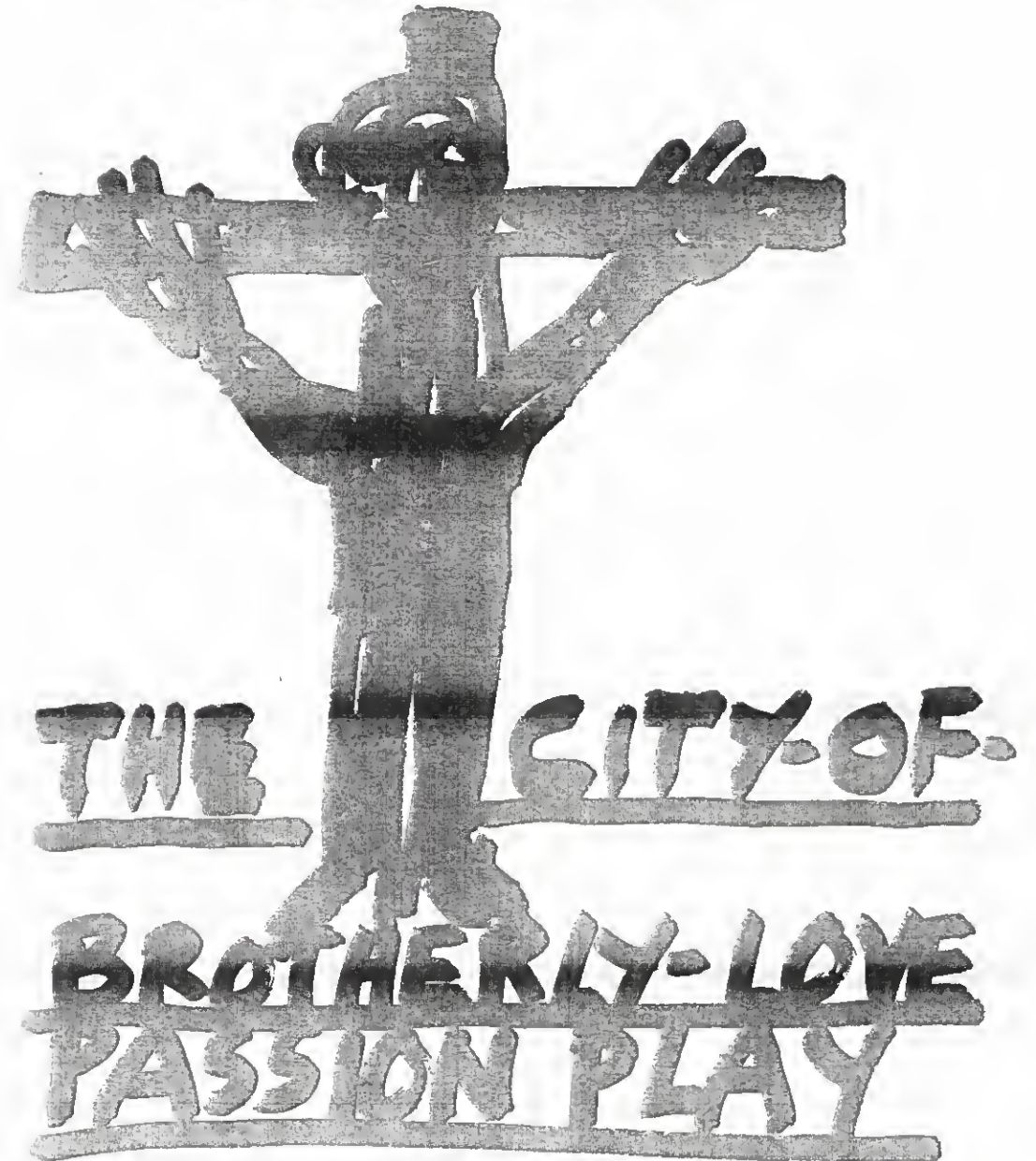
Bread & Puppet Press

Glover VT 05839

1000 copies printed at Troll Press, St. Johnsbury VT

April 1998

BREAD & PUPPET



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THE CITY-OF-BROTHERLY-
LOVE PASSIONPLAY

VERSE BY
BURT PORTER

1998

On March 13, 1998, Merle Africa died under suspicious circumstances in the Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania Prison. She was one of the nine M.O.V.E. members imprisoned since 1978 for the third degree murder of a Philadelphia policeman and serving a life sentence. In the United States, third degree murder carries a ten-to-twenty year penalty, not the thirty-to-one-hundred years which the MOVE members received.

More information may be obtained by writing:

M.O.V.E.

P.O. Box 19709

Philadelphia PA 19143

and ordering their booklet "Twenty-five Years on the MOVE".

Bread & Puppet Theater created a parading passion play about the M.O.V.E. family in the summer of 1997 and presented it at Our Domestic Resurrection Circus in Glover, Vermont in August, 1997. About sixty performers and singer-musicians participated. In February, 1998 the show was named "City of Brotherly Love Passion Play" and reworked to fit inside spaces. Then in March, April and May it travelled to Goddard College, Vermont; Rutgers, New Jersey; Northeast U., Boston, and Theater for the New City, NYC.

Sources for texts used in "City of Brotherly Love Passion Play" are: verses by Burt Porter of Glover, Vermont;

speech by John Africa, delivered in Philadelphia in 1977 and sent to the judges of the world;

"Twenty-five Years on the MOVE" booklet (see above);

"The Sacred Harp", Sacred Harp Publishing Co., Bremen, Georgia, 1991 ed. (American shape-note hymns first compiled in 1844), using the songs: Bridgewater, text Isaac Watts, music L. Edson, 1782 Greenwiche, text Isaac Watts, music D. Read, 1785 Stratfield, text Isaac Watts, music E. Goff, 1786 The Great Day, text anonymous, music J.P. Reese, 1859.

Peter Schumann directed the show and made the pictures here.

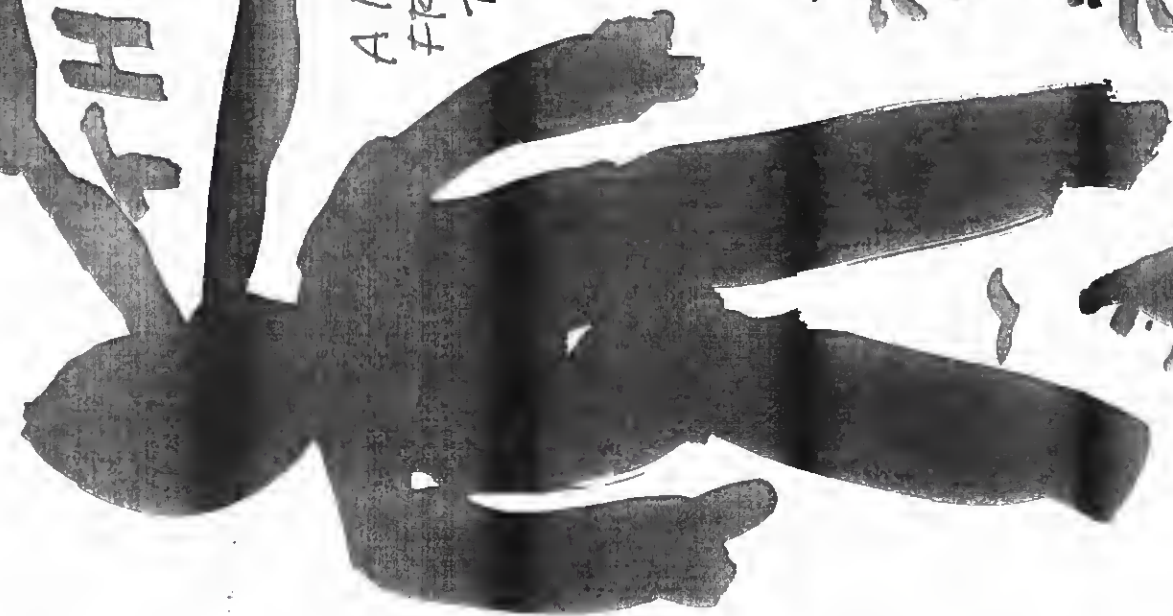
WE ALONG TIME HEARD
 THAT THERE WILL BE A
 JUDGEMENT THAT THERE
 WILL BE A JUDGEMENT
 THAT DAY



28



THIS IS



A MESSAGE
 FROM JOHN AFRICA
 TO ALL JUDGES
 OF THE WORLD
 AND ALL THOSE
 CONCERNED WITH
 THE PROBLEMS
 OF THE WORLD



①

THE COURTS ARE THE TOOLS OF THE
INDUSTRIAL PLAGUE GRANTING BIG
BUSINESS PRIVILEGE TO POISON OUR EARTH
SCIENTIFIC DREAMS THAT HAVE TURNED
TO NIGHTMARES, NUCLEAR PLANTS
BELCHING SICKNESS, WEAK LUNGS, PUSHED
ON THE PEOPLE DESPITE THEIR RESISTANCE
CRIPPLING OUR CHILDREN UNTIL THEY ARE
DEAD, REFORMING LIFE'S WAY TO THAT OF
A SCIENCE, TAKING **our water**
FAMILIAR AND CLEAN AND TURNING IT
INTO A PORTION THAT'S POISON, AIR THAT
WAS RIGHT AS THE GOD THAT
SUSTAINS IT IS NOW STRANGULATION TO
ALL THAT MUST BREATHE IT **DESPITE**
WHAT YOU TELL FOLKS WITH LAWS AND
AMENDMENTS YOU STUFF DOWN FOLKS' THREATS
FOR NUCLEAR POWER IS STILL IN EXISTENCE
AND **WASTE** IS THE MONSTER THAT
COMES WITH THIS HORROR AND DISEASE WILL
BE LAID AT THE COURT, LAID ON THE JUDGES
AND THOSE THAT COME AND THEM, POLITICIANS
INDUSTRIALISTS, ALL THOSE OF GREED, THIS IS
THE FILTH THAT YOU JUDGES PROTECT RICH
FOLKS AND INDUSTRY. BIG BUSINESS, MONEY
POOR FOLKS IS JUST LIKE DEAD WOOD TO THE COURT
THEY'RE CUT UP AND BURNT UP AND SET OUT
②

STATE POLICE HELICOPTER
DROPPED A BOMB CONTAINING
4 POUNDS OF C-4 EXPLOSIVE
ON THE
A FIRE
ALLOWED
MEMBER,
FLEE BUT
POLICE GUN-
AND A CHILD
THE FIRE AND
GADGETS AND
KILLED. THE
BURNING DOWN
NO POLICE -
OFFICIAL WAS
FOR THE
DESTRUCTION
TRIED TO
WERE MET WITH
FIRE. RAMONA AFRICA
BIRDY AFRICA ESCAPED.
WERE ARRESTED.
5 CHILDREN WERE
BLAZE SPREAD
60 HOMES.
MAN OR PUBLIC
EVER INDICTED
DEATHS AND
②7

ON MAY 11
OBTAINED
FOR MOVE
ON CHARGES
CONDUCT
THREATS.

DAY

POLICE EVACUATED
ON THE MORNING
POLICE AND
ARMED WITH A
MILITARY WEAPON
AN ASSAULT ON
THERE WERE
6 CHILDREN
THE MOVE
REFUSED TO
POLICE FIRED
ROUNDS OF
AT THE HOUSE

1985 POLICE
ARREST WARRANTS
MEMBERS
OF DISORDERLY
AND TERRORIST
THE NEXT

ATED THE BLOCK
OF MAY 13
FIRE MEN
VAST ARRAY OF
PONY PREPARED
THE MOVE HOUSE
7 ADULTS AND
INSIDE. WHEN
MEMBERS
SURRENDER
OVER 10,000
AMMUNITION
THEN A

(26)

AS TRASH YOU **JUDGES** AIN'T GET
AWAY WITH NONE OF THIS STUFF YOU HURT
PEOPLE IN THE NAME OF INDUSTRY EVER SINCE
THAT EXISTENCE OF INDUSTRY MONOPOLY
EXPLOITATION, YOU HAVE JAILED POOR FOLKS
DESPITE INNOCENCE, FREED RICH FOLKS DESPITE
GUILT, COLLECTED YOUR SALARY FROM BOTH AND
MADE POOR FOLKS PAY THE BULK OF IT, THIS
SYSTEM IS ROTTEN FROM END TO END, IT HAS
BEEN **SET UP BY THE RICH TO BENEFIT**
THE RICH GIVE THEM MUCH MORE THAN THE
POOR FOLKS THEY HIRE, ACCESSING THE RICH
AND INSULTING, ENSLAVING EXECUTING THE
POOR FOR WHEN YOU ARE OWNED BY A SUBJECT
YOU ARE A SLAVE OF THAT SUBJECT, **YOU CAN'T**
EAT IN THE SYSTEM UNLESS YOU WORK IN
FOR THE SYSTEM, YOU CAN'T WORK IN
THE SYSTEM UNLESS YOU'VE GOT
THE SYSTEMS FROM THE SYSTEM
CREDENTIALED THE JUDGES YOU JUDGES ARE
INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHED THIEVES AND SINCE
SLAVES OF THE ESTABLISHED THIEVES CONTROL THE MONEY
THE ESTABLISHED THIEVES ELSE SLAVES TO THEM, ALONG
THEY MADE EVERYBODY ELSE SLAVES TO THEM, THIS IS THEIR
WITH YOU JUDGES, LAWYERS, POLITICIANS, THIS IS THEIR
SYSTEM. IT IS BUILT ON MONEY. FOLKS CAN'T GET NOTHING
IN THIS SYSTEM WITHOUT MONEY **AND CAN'T**
GET MONEY WITHOUT
GOING THROUGH THOSE
THAT CONTROL IT

(3)

JOHN AFRICA
THOUGHT HIS
PEOPLE HOW
TO LIVE IN A SIMPLE
NATURAL WAY
HIS PEOPLE FORMED
A GROUP CALLED MOVE
IT IS THEIR STORY
WE TELL TODAY

TODAY EIGHT PEOPLE ARE STILL IN JAIL
FOR WHAT WAS DONE 20 YEARS AGO
IN PHILADELPHIA. WE INVITE YOU NOW
TO LEARN MOVE'S STORY
AND SEE OUR SHOW

(4)

IN 1983 MOVE
THEIR CHILDREN
ROW HOUSE ON
ON DEC. 25
MOVE
LOUD-
SPEAKERS
MOUNTED
HOUSE TO PROTEST
IMPRISONMENT
MOVE MEMBERS
OSAGE AVE
RESIDENTS
SOUGHT
MOVE
NEIG
MOVE
FORTIFY
HOME

(25)

MEMBERS AND
LIVED IN A
OSAGE AVE
1983
USED

ON THEIR
THE
OF
SOME

GET
OF
GOOD
TO

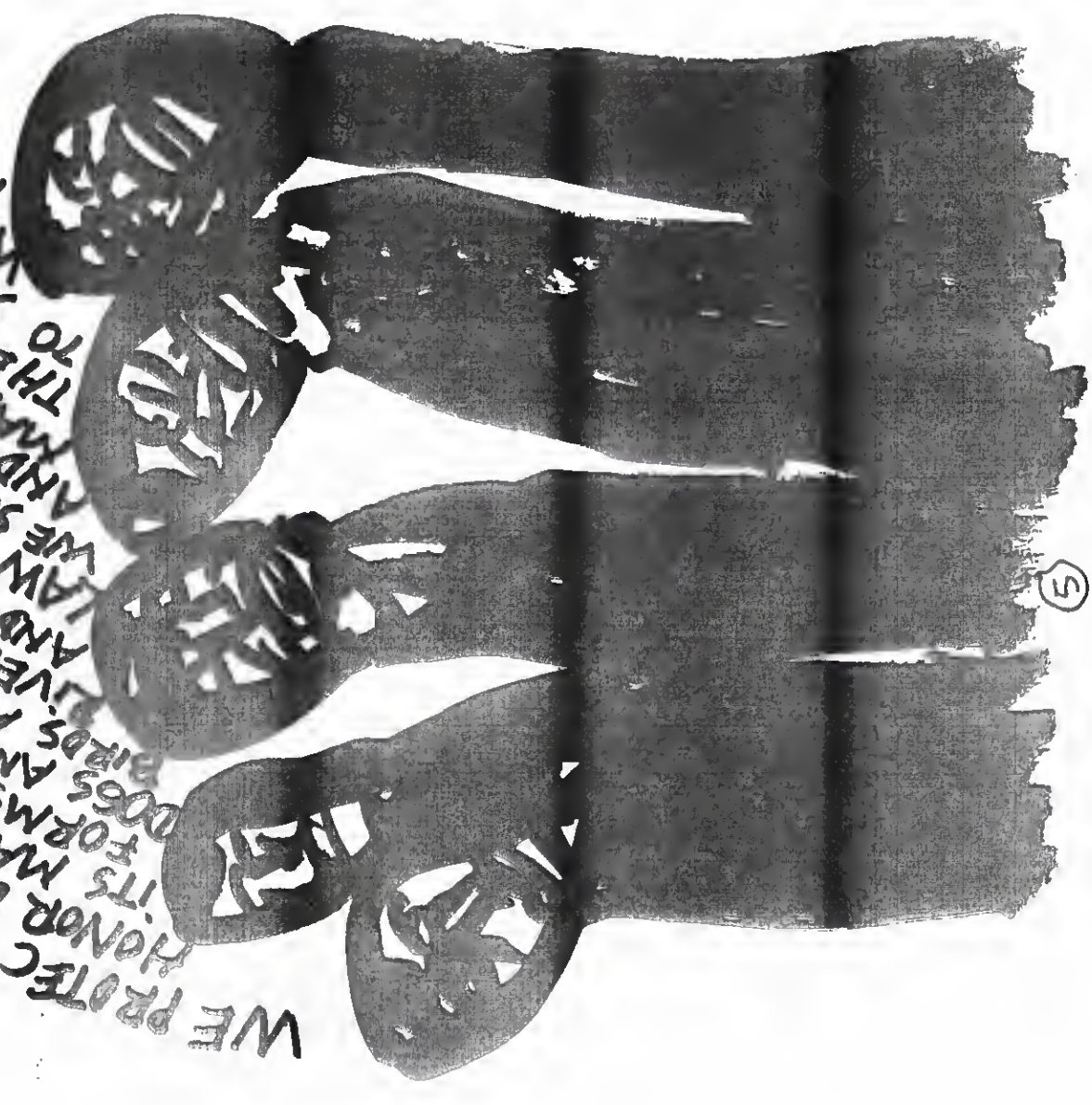
THE

IN NATURAL
LAW MOVE TRUSTS
THE ORDER OF
LIFE. THE OF
TRUTH IS FINAL
LONG LIVE MOVE
LONG LIVE THE
REVOLUTION
POWER LIVE THAT
PULLS THINGS
TOGETHER



42

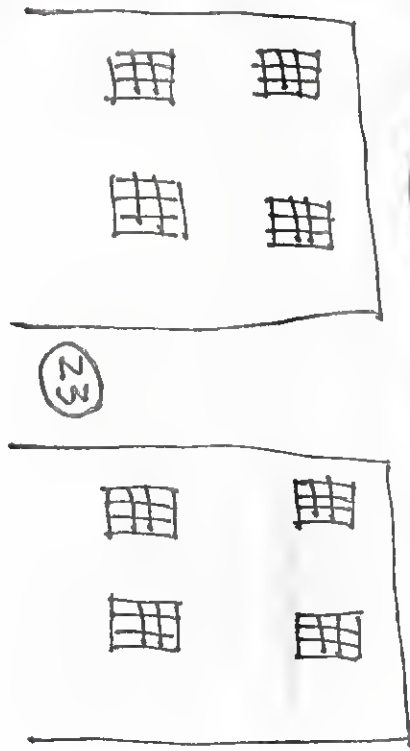
WE PROTECT AND
HONOR LIFE IN ALL
ITS MANY VARIED
FORMS AND TREES AND
BIRDS AND WINDS
AND THUNDER
LAW LIKE LIFE
AND SAY IS NATURAL
AND CANNOT BE
MADE BY MAN
THE SYSTEM WORKS
STRIANGLE LIFE
WE'LL OVERTHROW
IT IF WE CAN

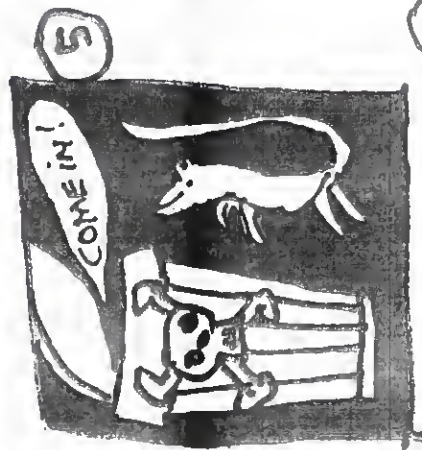
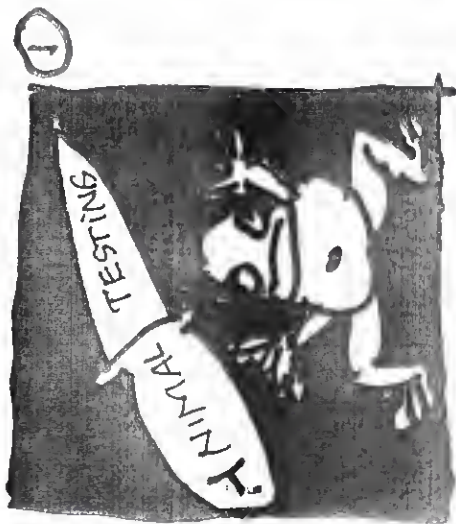


5

ALTHOUGH DESTROYING THE EVIDENCE OF A CRIME IS ILLEGAL
 POLICE BULLDOZERS DESTROYED THE
 HOUSE. ITS FOUNDATIONS AND THE
 TREES IN THE YARD. NO EFFORTS WERE
 MADE TO PRESERVE THE CRIMESCENE

ALTHOUGH ALL HAS BEEN
 EVIDENCE DESTROYED REAL TRUTH
 TO ME THE APPEARANCE OF
 KNOW YOU GUILTY OF
 IF I FIND CHARGES FROM 30
 YOU'LL SERVE YEARS
 TO 100





⑦

SUN MOON AND STARS
CONVEY THE WHOLE
EARTH AND NEVER
STAND



⑧



(8)

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

WHEN YOU REPEATERS
UP WHO DID WHAT
STIR THINGS UP WHO DID WHAT
TO FIND OUT WHERE US LOTS OF PEOPLE
AND CAUSE US LOTS OF FAIR
YOU JUST CAUSE IT ISN'T FAIR
TO THE POLICE IT ISN'T FAIR
TO THE

ONE QUESTION
PLEASE



MAYOR

THESE MOVE PEOPLE JUST CAUSE RICH
PROBLEMS THEY MUST BE GOT THE SWITCH
THEY SIMPLY GLAD TO PULL THE SWITCH
AND I'LL BE GLAD TO PULL THE SWITCH

PLEASE SIR
DO YOU HAVE
A COMMENT?

THIRD PHILADELPHIA
COURT OF APPEALS
JUDGE ABEL GANCE
PRESIDING

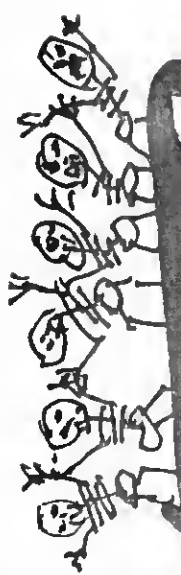
ALL RISE



JUDGE

YOU DO NOT STAND UP WHEN
I ENTER FROM MY RULES
I ENTER NOT EXEMPT
YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS
YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS
I PRONOUNCE YOU IN CONTEMPT
NOW WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE IN THIS CASE?

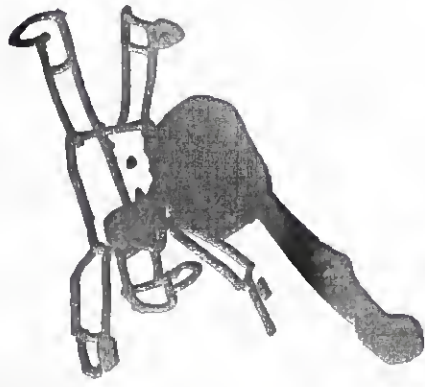
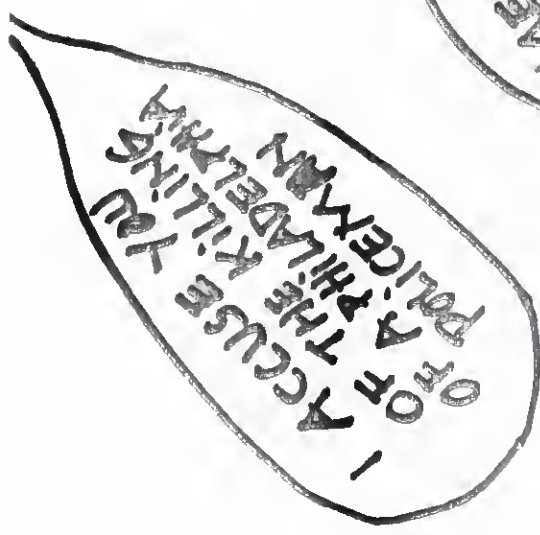
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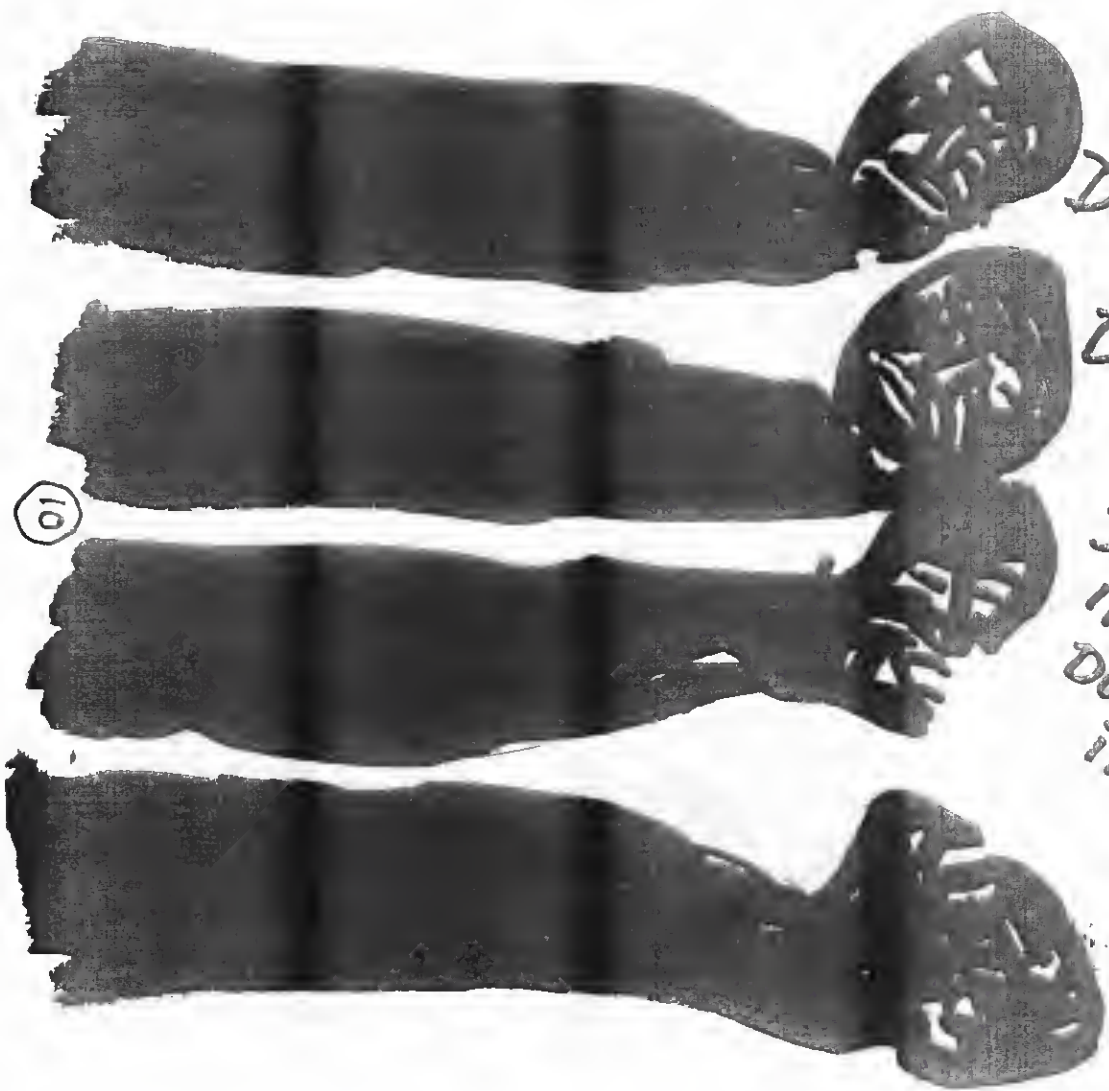
SYSTEM



5



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DOWN WITH
THE SYSTEM!
DON'T BELIEVE
THE SYSTEM!
JUST BECAUSE
IT'S LEGAL
DOESN'T MAKE
IT RIGHT!

READY MEN. YES SIR
AIM YES SIR FIRE
YES SIR BANG BANG
BANG BANG BANG
BANG BANG BANG



TODAY WHEN
THE REAR
IN RESPONSE
POLICEMEN
RECEIVED WITH
RESISTANCE AND
RESTRAINT

MEOW

READY MEN



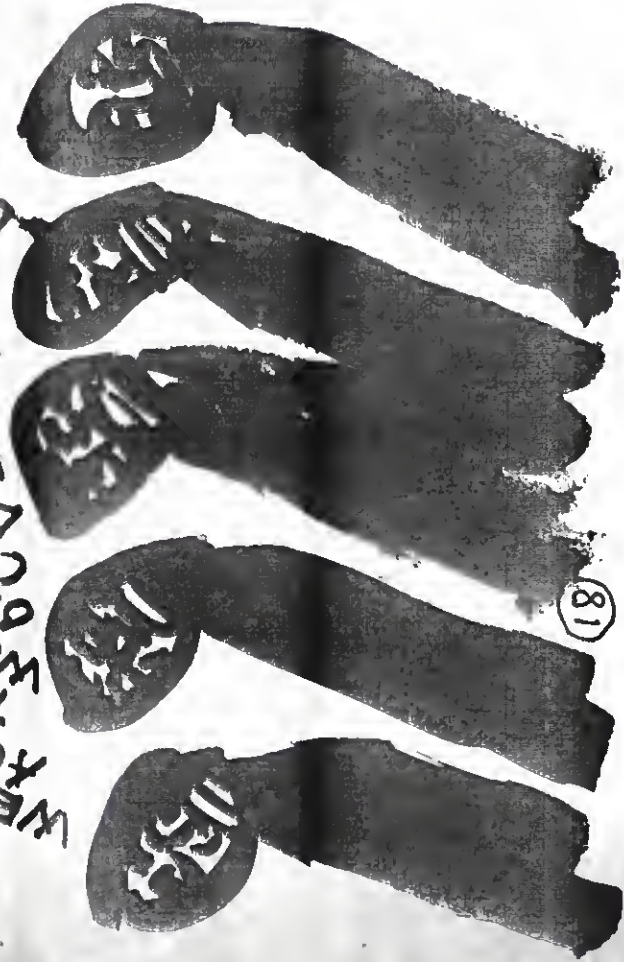
YES SIR



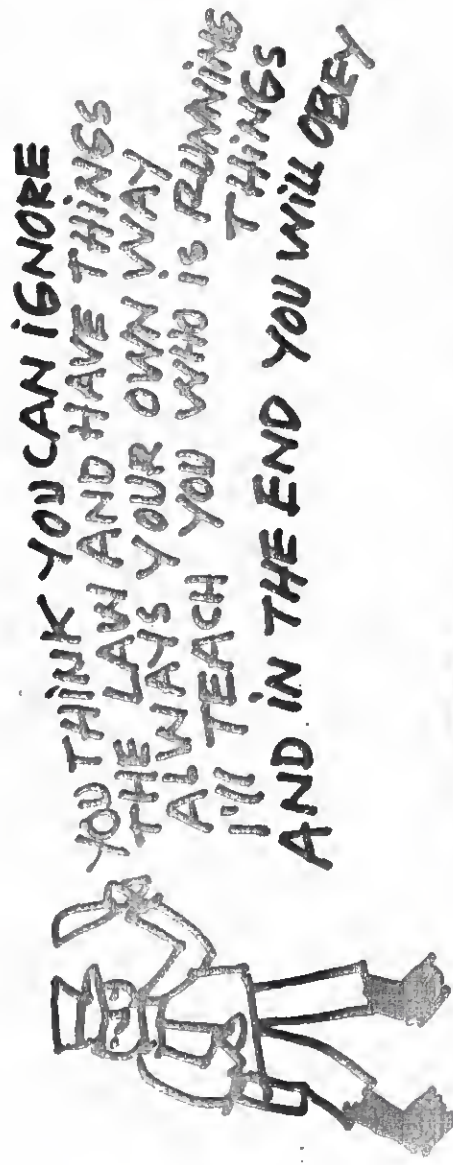
HERE WE HAVE A NEW
COURT ORDER FOR A STRICT
POLICE BLOCKADE. MOVE WILL
HAVE NO FOOD NOR WATER
THEY WILL WISH THEY HAD
THEY WILL WISH OBEYED



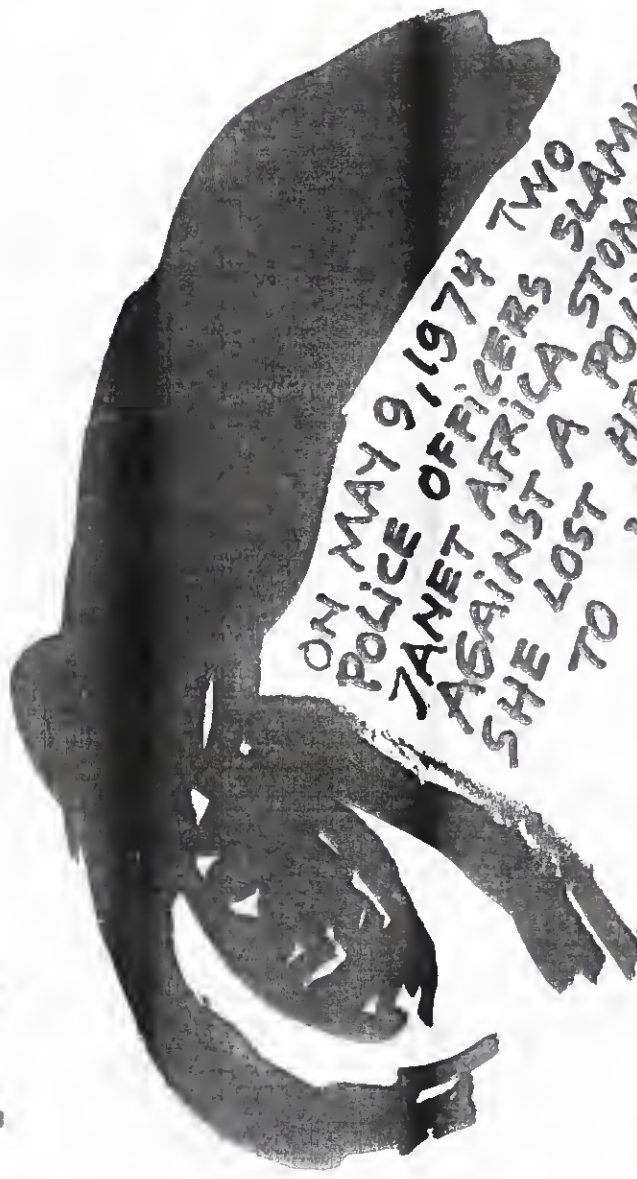
WE DO NOT
KICK
OUT THIS ORDER
WE WILL HOLD WE
CAN LIVE LIKE LIFE
LAW SAY IS
NATURAL
AND CANNOT
BE MADE
BY MAN



(18)



YOU THINK YOU CAN IGNORE
THE LAW AND HAVE THINGS
ALWAYS YOUR OWN WAY
I'LL TEACH YOU WHO IS RUNNING
THINGS
AND IN THE END YOU WILL OBEY



ON MAY 9, 1974 TWO
POLICE OFFICERS SLAMMED
JANET AFRICA STOMACH-FIRST
AGAINST A POLICE CAR.
SHE LOST HER BABY DUE
TO MISCARRIAGE

OH WHAT A THOUGHTLESS
WRETCH WAS I
TO MOURN

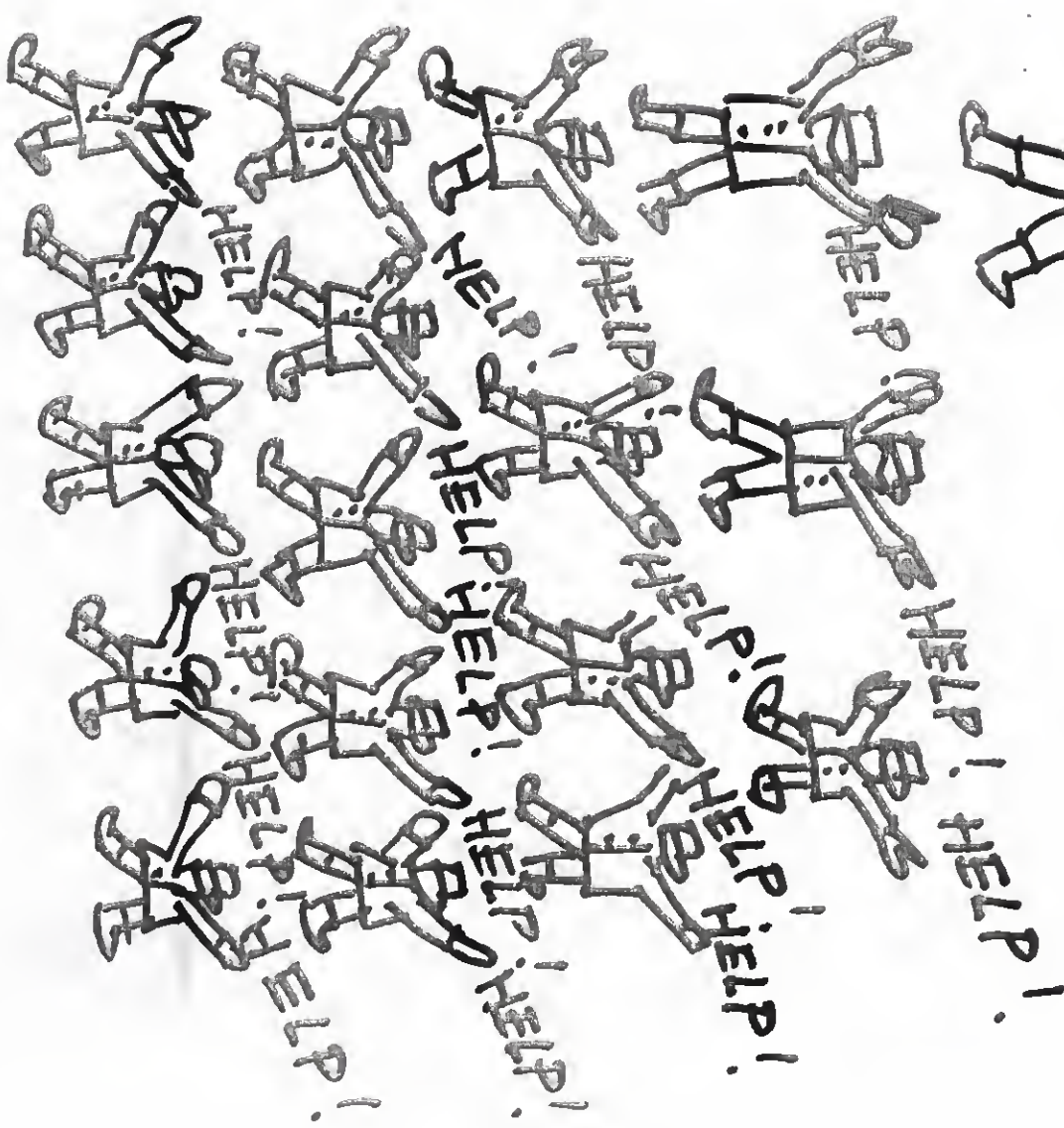


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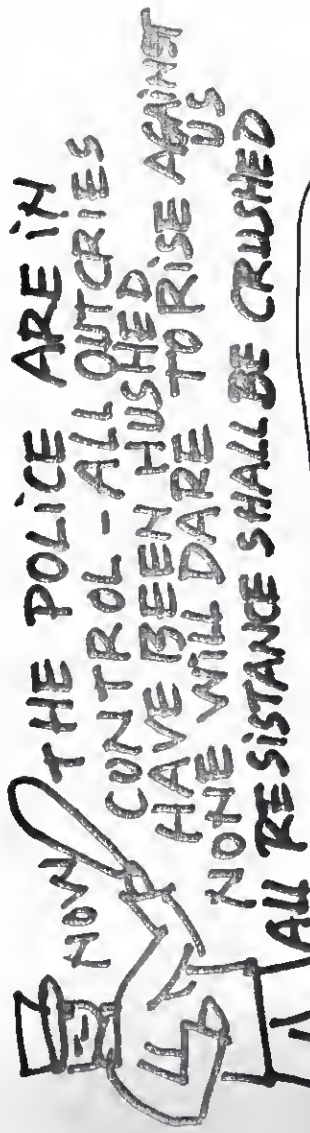


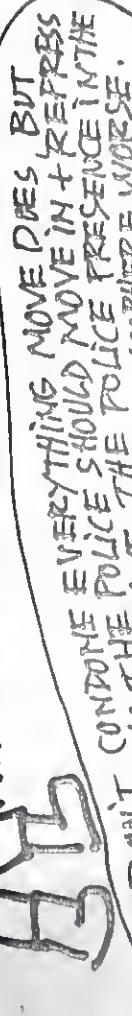
THE WORK OF
MOVE IS
REVOLUTION
WE AGITATE
WE DONT COMPLY
WE SHOW HOW THE
SYSTEM HURTS US
WE EXPOSE
THE SYSTEMS
LIES

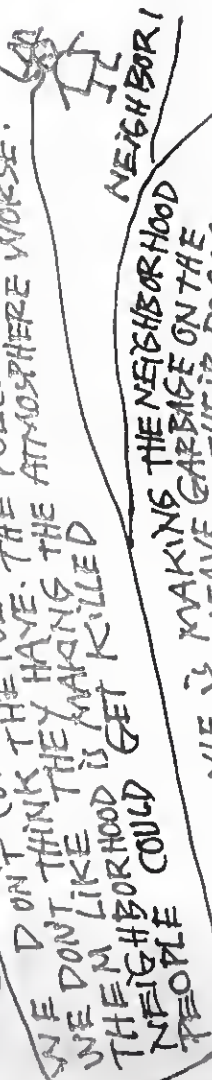
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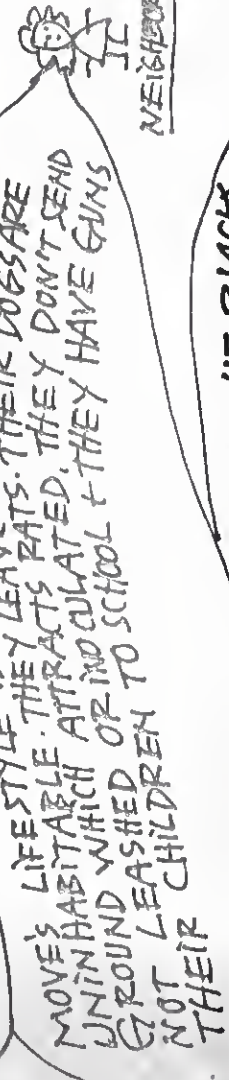


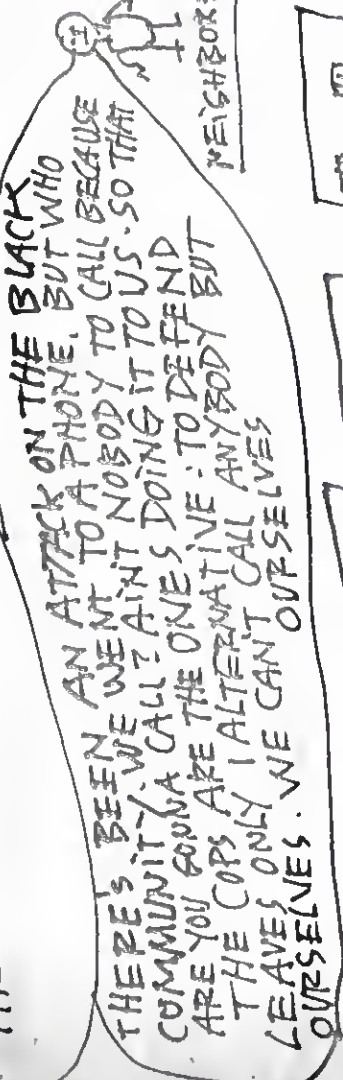
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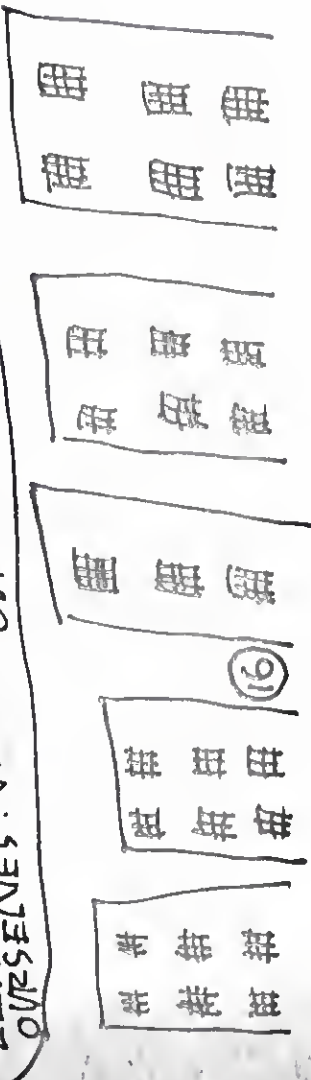

 NOW THE POLICE ARE IN
 CONTROL - ALL OUTCRIES
 HAVE BEEN HUSHED
 NONE WILL DARE TO RISE AGAINST
 US
 ALL RESISTANCE SHALL BE CRUSHED

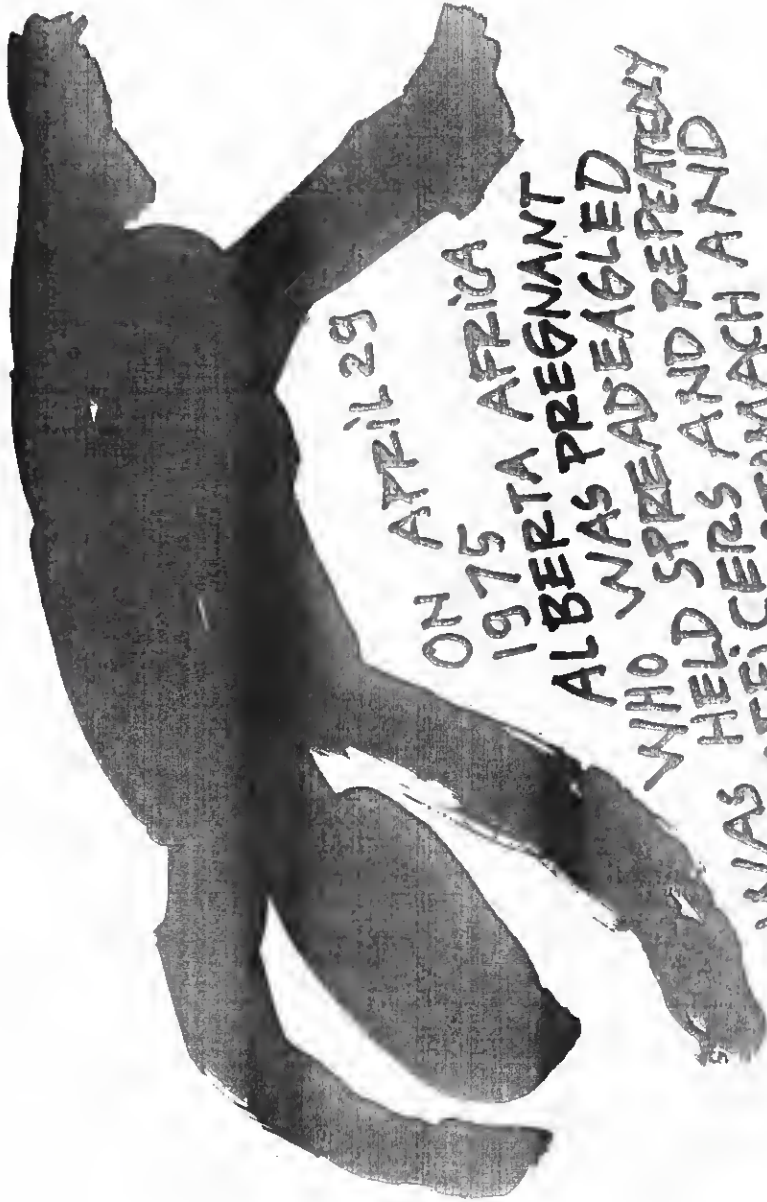

 WE DON'T CONDONE EVERYTHING MOVE DOES BUT
 WE DON'T THINK THE POLICE SHOULD MOVE IN + REPRESS
 THEM LIKE THEY HAVE. THE POLICE PRESENCE IN THE
 NEIGHBORHOOD IS MAKING THE ATMOSPHERE WORSE.


 NEIGHBOR!
 PEOPLE COULD GET KILLED


 THE NEIGHBORHOOD
 IS MAKING THE NEIGHBORHOOD
 MOVES LIFESTYLE. THEY LEAVE GARBAGE ON THE
 GROUND WHICH ATTRACTS RATS. THEY DON'T SEND
 NOT LEASHED OR IN SCHOOL + THEY HAVE GUNS
 THEIR


 THERE'S BEEN AN ATTACK ON THE BLACK
 COMMUNITY. WE WENT TO A PHONE, BUT WHO
 ARE YOU GOING TO CALL? AIN'T NOBODY DOING IT TO US. SO THAT
 THE COPS ARE THE ONES DOING IT TO DEFEND
 LEAVES ONLY AN ALTERNATIVE: TO DEFEND
 OURSELVES. WE CAN'T CALL ANYBODY BUT
 OURSELVES.


 (16)



ON APRIL 29
 1975 ALBERTA PREGNANT
 WHO WAS PREGNANT
 WHO SPREAD REPEATEDLY
 HELD SPREAD AND REPEATEDLY
 WAS OFFICERS STOMACH AND
 KICKED IN THE STOMACH AS A RESULT
 OF A MISCARRIAGE
 MISCARRIAGE

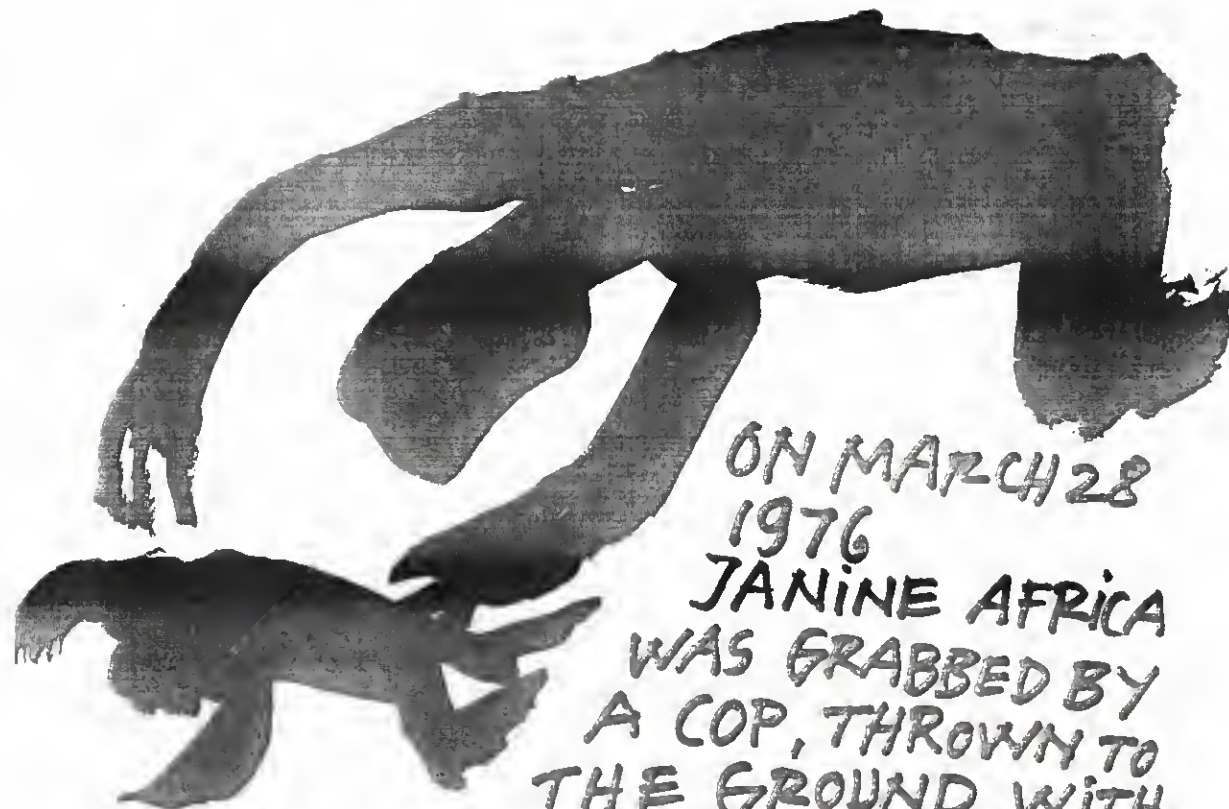
OH WHAT A THOUGHT
 WHAT A THOUGHT
 WRETCH
 TO MOURN



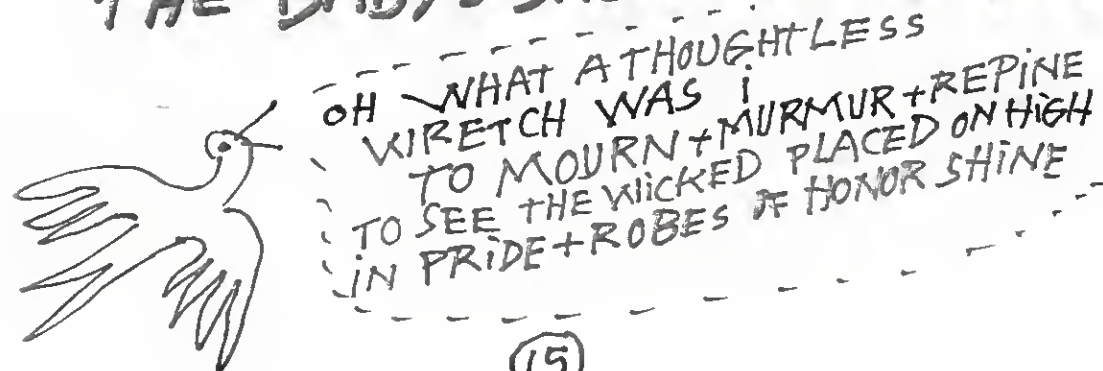
THE WORK
OF MOVIE
IS REVOLUTION
WE AGITATE
WE DON'T
COMPLY



(14)



ON MARCH 28
1976
JANINE AFRICA
WAS GRABBED BY
A COP, THROWN TO
THE GROUND WITH
3-WEEK OLD LIFE AFRICA IN
HER ARMS AND STOMPED
TILL SHE WAS NEARLY UNCONSCIOUS.
THE BABY'S SKULL WAS CRUSHED



OH WHAT A THOUGHTLESS
WRETCH WAS I
TO MOURN + MURMUR + REPINE
TO SEE THE WICKED PLACED ON HIGH
IN PRIDE + ROBES OF HONOR SHINE

(15)